



California Department of Veterans Affairs

News Release

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September 8, 2008

Department Of Labor Launches America's Heroes At Work To Help Returning Service Members Succeed In The Workplace

For wounded and injured veterans, employment can play a significant role on the road the recovery. So to help our returning service members succeed in the workplace, **America's Heroes at Work**, a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) project, is engaging in a targeted education campaign designed to increase awareness of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) issues and to educate employers on workplace accommodations they can make for these employees. The project equips employers and the workforce development system with the tools they need to help returning service members affected by TBI and/or PTSD succeed in the workplace - particularly service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

"It is imperative that returning service members with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder be given the assistance needed to allow them to rebuild their lives," said Tom Johnson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "And assisting them to secure employment after treatment will empower them by giving them a healthy sense of self worth and pride that directly translates into reintegrating them as fully contributing members of our society."

The **America's Heroes at Work** project offers a variety of educational resources devoted to improving employment-related outcomes for returning service members with TBI and/or PTSD. Materials, available online at www.americasheroesatwork.gov, include fact sheets, Web-based training tools, educational presentations and more - all designed for employers, workforce development professionals, service branches, key military support systems, veterans' service organizations and One-Stop Career Centers. Due to advances in military medicine and protective equipment, increased numbers of service members are surviving the injuries they sustain on the battlefield. However, the changing combat landscape has caused a sharp increase in TBI and PTSD, which are increasingly recognized as leading injuries of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hundreds of thousands of brave men and women will be coping with the challenges of TBI and PTSD as they reenter civilian life, today and for many years to come.

Although their injuries may not be visible, service members with TBI or PTSD may face difficulties, especially with respect to employment. These individuals may suffer from headaches, vertigo, balance problems, anxiety and sleep disturbance, among other symptoms. They also may have cognitive symptoms including short-term memory deficits, poor concentration and decision-making difficulties. All of these can interfere with everyday activities, inside and outside of the workplace.

America's Heroes at Work is managed jointly by DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) in collaboration with other federal agencies engaged in TBI and PTSD programs, including the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, Health and

Human Services and Education, the Small Business Administration, the Social Security Administration and others.

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Note to editors: This Veterans News Advisory and previous CDVA news releases, advisories, and newsletters are available on our website at www.cdva.ca.gov and via email from Jaime.Arteaga@cdva.ca.gov.